Gateway

Premier Issue

The ARRL Packet-Radio Newsletter

August 14, 1984

WELCOME

Welcome to Gateway, the ARRL packet-radio newsletter. Some of you reading this are deeply involved in amateur packet radio, some of you are just getting started on this exciting new mode, and some of you aren't quite sure what "packet radio" is. We hope that Gateway will have something to offer each of you.

WHAT IS A "GATEWAY?"

A gateway is a station that links two communications networks. In amateur packet radio, gateway stations are being used communicate between VHF and HF networks, and between VHF networks and satellite channels. Eventually, users of local VHF networks will use gateways to connect to an international packet-radio network. We have called this newsletter Gateway because we hope that it will, like a gateway station, facilitate communications between amateurs interested in packet radio.

Gateway will not be a technical newsletter; there are already several fine packet-radio newsletters covering technical issues. This will be a "news" newsletter. At ARRL Headquarters we have many sources of news not all of which are available to each of you. This newsletter will bring together notes from these sources. Overseas and domestic packet-radio club newsletters, the FCC, the IARU, on-line conferences and on-the-air bulletin boards will contribute. You may see items that you've seen elsewhere, but you should also see things that are new and interesting.

Some of you are receiving this packet-radio newsletter and have never even considered what packet radio can do for you, or what fun you could have on packet. We hope to provide you with an overview of the state of amateur packet radio, explaining what is being done and what can be done on this new mode.

It seems as though every packet-radio club is undertaking some project that will advance amateur packet radio. To make these projects fruitful, we must make the most of the limited resources available to amateurs. By telling a large audience about various packet-radio development efforts, Gateway should help organizers direct their efforts, and help volunteers find the groups that need them.

Perhaps when there is a worldwide amateur packet-radio network there will be no need for packet-radio newsletters. Until then, we hope that Gateway informs and interests you.

PACKET METEOR SCATTER

Last weekend's Persieds meteor shower provided a good opportunity to experiment with packet-radio meteor-scatter operation. Rich Zwirko, K1HTV, set forth some experimental guidelines, and stations throughout the U.S. attempted MS QSOs.

On August 1, well before the peak of the Persieds, WØRPK, the station of the Central Iowa Technical Society, held schedules with Bob Carpenter, W3OTC, in Maryland. The skeds were on 6 meters. Bob received about 2% of the packets sent from Iowa. Four nights later, again on 6 meters, W3OTC and WØRPK had what is believed to be the first amateur packet-radio meteor-scatter QSO.

As the Persieds approached, stations tried their luck on the 2-meter band. Stations in the East included K1HTV; Vern Riportella, WA2LQQ; Tom Clark, W3IWI; Hank Oredson, WØRLI; and Mark Wilson, AA2Z. In the West were Ralph Wallio, W0RPK; Bob McCaffrey, KØCY; Ron Dunbar, WØPN; Mike McQuiston, WAØWYW; Bob Schiers, NØAN; and Terry Van Benschoten, WØVB. Several of these stations copied beacons and connect requests via MS. On the morning of August 12, during the peak of the shower, WØRPK and K1HTV completed the first packet MS QSO on 2 meters. Congratulations are in order for all stations involved in these tests, and I hope that I haven't left anyone out.

These tests were performed at 1200 bauds, using AFSK FM. While it was necessary to use this mode in order to include as many stations as possible in the experiments, a performance sacrifice was made. We should organize further tests at higher transmission rates with more efficient modulation techniques.

ARRL APPOINTED IARU PACKET CENTER

The ARRL has been appointed IARU packet radio "information clearing house." The following is exerpted from the minutes of the IARU meeting in late July: "ARRL is nominated as the international clearing house of information relating to packet radio on behalf of the IARU, with a view to encouraging common standards and regulations."

This points the way toward international understanding and acceptance of packet radio standards generated in the United States and Canada. Several European amateurs have hesitated to get involved in packet radio because they were not sure which standards would "catch on." The appointment should help to alleviate this confusion abroad as to what is really happening in North American packet radio.

Club Listing

Here is a list of clubs active in Amateur packet radio.

Amateur Radio Research and Development Corp. (AMRAD)
P.O. Drawer 6148
McLean, VA 22106-6148

Amateur Radio Satellite Corp. (AMSAT)
P.O. Box 27
Washington, DC 20044

Chicago Area Packet Radio Association (CAPRA)
P.O. Box 8251
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008

Central Iowa Technical Society (CITS)
c/o Ralph Wallio, WØRPK
Rural Route 4
Indianola, IA 50125

Florida Amateur Digital Communications Assn. (FADCA)
c/o Ted Huff, K4NTA
1829 N. W. Pinetree Way
Stuart, FL 33494

Los Angeles Area Packet Group (LAPG)
c/o Harold Price, NK6K
1211 Ford Ave.
Redondo Beach, CA 90278

Minnesota Amateur Packet Radio (MAPR)
c/o Philip S. Plumbo, NØDFT
1128 Dayton Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55104

New England Packet Radio Assn. (NEPRA)
P.O. Box 15
Bedford, MA 01730

Rocky Mountain Packet Amateur Radio Assn. (RMPAR)
c/o Andy Freeborn, NØCCZ
52222 Borrego Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

San Diego Packet Group (SDPG)
c/o Mike Brock, WB6HHV
10230 Mayor Circle
San Deigo, CA 92126

Tucson Amateur Packet Radio Corp. (TAPR)
P.O. Box 22888
Tucson. AZ 85734

Vancouver Amateur Digital Communications Group (VADCG)
9531 Odin Road
Richmond, BC V6X 1E1
CANADA

Remember to include an s.a.s.e when writing to any of these clubs. Club money spent on postage is money that can't go into packet-radio development.

Voice Nets Concerning Packet Radio

The following voice nets are devoted to discussion of packet radio.

Day	Time	Frequency	Coverage	Sponsor
Mon	2000 PDT	145.36	Los Angeles	LAPG
Tue	2100 PDT	144.76	San Diego	SDPG
Tue	2200 EDT	3.850	Eastern U.S.	AMSAT
Thu	2000 EDT	147.12/72	Boston area	NEPRA
Sun	1900 UTC	14.235	National	TAPR
Sun	2100 UTC	7.158	National	TAPR
Sun	0800 EDT	3.958	Regional	FADCA
Sun	1900 EDT	147.165	Tampa area	FADCA
Sun	2100 EDT	147.285	Orlando area	FADCA
Sun	1500 CDT	7.158	Central U.S.	CITS

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American Radio Relay League
225 Main Street
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Larry E. Price, W4RA
President

David Sumner, K1ZZ
General Manager

Jeff W. Ward, K8KA
Editor

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